

OFFICIAL DISPATCH

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Dispatch No: FGB-A-895

BSC/Ops/193

4 December 1947

TO : Chief, Foreign Branch "M"  
FROM : Chief of Station Heidelberg, Germany  
SUBJECT: General : Possible Soviet Espionage Activity  
Specific: Ernst Gunther BURMEISTER

NOTE: Acting on information received from CAMISADE that ADN Berlin Desk Chief SCHWELIEN (cf MGB-5228/BSC-880) is an intimate friend of one BURMEISTER, employed by the US Forces in Berlin, CIC was asked to investigate. This memorandum is based on a preliminary CIC report on the case, which indicated Ernst Gunther BURMEISTER, German supervisor of the Machine Tabulations Branch of the 7771st Document Center, to be the BURMEISTER in question.

1. In November 1946 Ernst Gunther BURMEISTER quit a position as Assistant Section Head of the German Administration for Industry for the Soviet Zone to obtain employment as Chief German Supervisor and Consultant of the Machine Tabulations Branch, 7771st Document Center. When BURMEISTER began working for the statistical unit its head was a Klaus HENDRICKS, a US civilian who had known BURMEISTER from 1934 until 1936. HENDRICKS had formerly been connected with the International Business Machine Company at the same time BURMEISTER was with the German affiliate of that company (see para 4 below). HENDRICKS had considerable confidence in BURMEISTER, and while HENDRICKS was head of the unit BURMEISTER was permitted to remove documents from the office. HENDRICKS has since left the unit, and is now in Frankfurt am Main as the American Representative in Germany for the International Business Machine Company. BURMEISTER has told other members of the statistical unit staff that he, BURMEISTER, is being considered for the position of German head of the International Business Machine Company in Germany.

2. In his position BURMEISTER is not in a situation to handle any classified material. The unit has not in the past handled any material for processing which held a classification higher than that of "RESTRICTED". According to CIC, any statistics compiled by the unit are normally passed on to anyone who asks for them, including the SMA. However, the following examples of work processed by the unit lend credence to the theory that BURMEISTER may be reporting to the Soviets:

a. Comprehensive records for all US officers, civilians, and enlisted men on duty in Berlin are handled by this unit. These records, taken from questionnaires and transposed into a classification code, are carded by the unit. Records of Germans employed by the US Forces are similarly handled.

b. In the past the unit has processed public opinion surveys for the Information Control Division of OMGUS. These surveys have covered several fields, including, recently, a study of the opinions of prisoners of war returning from Russia.

c. A very exhaustive study is now being made of all foreign assets which Germans control in other countries. This

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for completion in three months, is being done at the request of the Finance Division, OMGUS.

d. Reports are received and processed by the unit concerning present industrial production in the US, British, and French Zones.

3. BURMEISTER, according to CIC, is known to be in touch with influential members of the SED, and was recently offered a high position in the SMA for the Soviet Zone. He is also known to sponsor discussion groups to which people from various fields are invited. These groups include people high in the Berlin civil administration and influential German politicians. Specific names have not yet been reported.

4. The following information on BURMEISTER's previous employment is based on the results of previous background investigations conducted by Public Safety Branch, OMGBS, and the Civil Administration Branch, OMGUS:

1927-1931 Chief bookkeeper for General Motors Corporation in Berlin.

1931-1932 Chief of Administration for the Exterikultur A.G. in Kolberg, Pomerania.

1932-1935 Chief accountant for the Deutsche Hollerith Maschinen G.m.b.H., an affiliate of the International Business Machine Company, in Berlin.

1935-c.1937 Buyer and Confidential Clerk with the Kassel firm of Henschel u. Sohn.

1937-1939 Director of the Deutsche Grosseinkaufsgesellschaft in Hamburg.

1939-1940 Drafted into the army in August 1939, he was given a physical discharge in July 1940 in the grade of private first class.

1940-1941 On his release from the army, BURMEISTER resumed his position as Director of the Deutsche Grosseinkaufsgesellschaft. In 1941 the firm was taken over by the government for war work, and BURMEISTER, faced with the choice between resigning and joining the NSDAP, resigned.

1941-1944 Manager, Export Branch, Reichsgruppe Industrie. He allegedly resigned this position "because of various corruption cases that occurred in his department".

July 1944-  
Oct 1944 Manager of the German Albanian Commercial Exchange (Deutsch-Albanisches Waren Ausgleichsbüro) in Tirana, Albania. He returned to Berlin in November 1944, and did not work until the end of the war.

May 1945-  
July 1945 An examiner with the Anti-Fascist Committee for the Bezirksbürgermeister of Berlin-Zehlendorf.

July 1945-  
Oct 1945 Trustee for various confiscated firms. He was removed from this position at the insistence of the Central Committee of the KPD.

Oct 1945-  
Nov 1945 Assistant Section Head of the German Administration for Industry for the Soviet Zone, responsible for the control and planning of food industry in the Soviet Zone. BURMEISTER left this position to obtain his present job with the Machine Tabulations Branch of the 7771st Document Center.

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5. Description:

BURMEISTER, Ernst Gunther.  
Berlin-Zehlendorf, Argentinische Allee 90 (US Sector).  
Born : 13 April 1905 at Stettin.  
Weight : 70 kg.  
Height : 176 cm.  
Hair : Dark blond.  
Eyes : Blue.  
Marital status: Married, no children.

6. All recipients of this memorandum are requested to furnish available traces.

G.B.P.

SC

Berlin

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AIR POUCH

MGB/A- 1009

CONFIDENTIAL

19 December 1947

Chief, Foreign Branch "M"

Chief of Station, Heidelberg, Germany

Transmittal of Raw Intelligence Report

MGB-5307/BSC-883

The attached report represents the last in a series which has covered the major establishments and key personnel of the Soviet News Bureau. Supplementary reports relating significant changes in policy and personnel, or substantiating in any way our original premise viz that SNB serves as a cover for Soviet inspired collection of clandestine information will be prepared in the future. Evidence along the latter lines has been admittedly meager, but its meagerness should not be construed as a rebuttal. As indicated by the classification of most of our reports on the SNB, they have fastened on the more overt aspects of SNB. We consider this a necessary prerequisite to coverage of its clandestine aspects. The complete body of reports on SNB should therefore be viewed as furnishing us, and other interested agencies, the necessary raw material upon which to base briefs and against which to check the accuracy of pertinent information which may later be gathered. The next chapter in SNB coverage will, if all goes well, be written by [redacted], who should be in a position to elucidate on the covert aspects of SNB activities.

[redacted]  
Chief, SC Brln

Distribution:

See Report.

[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
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